

WAS SLAIN WOMAN SUFFRAGE MARTYR?

Good Samaritan of Marlinton
Dead, While Her Husband
Denies Murder Charge.

(Continued from First Page)
Virginia family, the Roberisons, near
Fairfax, who in the earliest days were
among the feudal barons of the State.
The idea of serving humanity appealed
to Mrs. Robertson, when scarcely more
than a girl, & a career as a nurse at
Marlinton gratified her.

Marlinton is in the West Virginia
lumber region. Its people are whole-
some hard-working folk, in some cases
well-to-do. The town itself, however,
the county claims to export
more lumber than any other east of the
Mississippi.

Marlinton welcomed to its hospital the
Virginia girl with a tact for nursing
and, ministering to the afflicted,
no-matter what their trials might be.
At the hospital and throughout the
village she became a modern Good
Samaritan, responding cheerfully to every
call, whether friend or foe. She
was uniring in her acts of service. Mar-
linton has its aristocrats, but she won
them, as well as the family, of the
Jumberjack.

All Took an Interest in Hospital Romance.

Connected with the hospital was a
Canadian, Dr. Oliver Arnold Howard,
who had taken his medical degree at
the University of Maryland in 1905 and
came to West Virginia in practice. The
return of the lovable nurse fell upon
him as upon others. Dr. Howard, how-
ever, was of moody, temperamental
nature, and when he became enamored
of Miss Robertson, it resulted in an
impulsive wooing the aman won the
hand of Miss Robertson. The marriage
of Dr. Howard and Miss Robertson
gave Marlinton a hospital romance in
which the entire community felt an interest.

For a few months the two seemed
happy together. Then while that cloud had come across the path
of life towards them, small towns, gas-
spers and clerks and domestic secrets
do not always remain so.

Dr. Howard left the hospital and es-
tablished an office in town. His neighbors
talked of his "irritability" and
ministered with their comment, were occa-
sional references to the alleged ill-
treatment of his wife. Resentment
was felt, perhaps, but it was not the
business of outsiders to interfere.

Mrs. Howard would tell the visiting
men of the village, she explained, that
she had "fallen down the steps," or
ran into a corner of the refrigerator.
Her explanations were accepted, but
the gossip did not cease. One day she
attributed two black eyes to "falling
upon the railroad tracks." Then she
burst into tears and the townsmen believed
much and increased its resentment.

According to those who knew the hab-
its of Dr. Howard, he grew more moody
and prone to argue over trifles and
more contentious. At times he appeared in
the depths of melancholia, again he
seemed to be merrily walking on air.
That he was a victim of the drug habit
was feared by some of his intimates.

At this step her husband became
active. This step her husband became
determined to have bitterly opposed and
designed to have forbidden her to attend
or participate. She was a member of
the W.C.T.U. and other organizations
and became deeply interested in the
woman suffrage cause. She believed in
the justice of the cause of women for
the ballot and determined to do every-
thing in her power to aid in the up-
keep of womanhood.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, August
18, 1918, the woman suffrage meeting
had opened what she called "my first
speech." Despite the fact that she and
Dr. Howard had an alteration on the
street during the morning—presumably
over her suffrage activities—Mrs. How-
ard emerged from the meeting as happy
as a lark and enthusiastic over the
prospect of ultimate success.

At the meeting Dr. Howard read the
President's letter to the Jane Jefferson
Club of Denver, repeating his views on
the suffrage issue.

Husband Followed Her into Apartment.

On the way home that afternoon Mrs.
Howard purchased a set of embroidery
for the birthday gift of a little six-year-

old girl. The
University Hospital, conducted the in-
vestigation, directed by Dr. McMichael.
He stated that he had never in his medi-
cal practice found a case where a
woman had been killed by a man
in such a manner, except a similar
accident in criminal medical methods.

The evidence brought out by the re-
spected legal was absolutely convincing
that Dr. physician, Dr. Mrs. Howard
had been caused by the grasp
of a powerful right hand by the grasp
of a sudden jerk dislocated her
brain by a violent blow and caused
immediate death. Dr. McMichael's ver-
dict Wednesday afternoon was brought
together with the hand-print
and identified his previous evidence, saying
that Mrs. Howard "was struck
dead" probably by the hand of Oliver
Howard.

The next step was the arrest of Dr.
Howard, but he put up a strenuous defense
of innocence, allowing that he had found
the woman unconscious from the use of
some narcotic.

Dr. Howard made the following state-
ment to a Times representative, which
Mr. Sharp, prosecuting attorney of Putnam County, to
be at wide variance of his evidence:

"When I got home, I went into my
room, between 4:30 and 5 P.M., there
must have been some thoughts in my
mind. I walked out into the hall in a
dark room, bedroom, across the transom.
First I tried the door. It was locked.
Then I stood on a chair, shook over
the transom, and saw Mrs. Howard
standing on the door.

"Then I ran through another dark
room, which leads into the room Mrs.
Howard was in, but that door too was
locked. Then I ran back to the chair
and tried to climb over. I couldn't, and
then I got a nail-puller and a box. But
even then I was unable to reach
the door."

Pulled Refrigerator Over to the Door.

"No I dragged a refrigerator, which
was on the other side of the hall, across
the door, and climbed over. As I
was pulling the refrigerator over, a
couple of castors came out, and soon
exposed it soiled on the transom.

"I climbed over the transom, and
there was my wife on the bed uncon-
scious. She had evidently been un-
conscious, and she was scarcely breath-
ing. I slapped her face hard, as I had
done when her son, but I didn't succeed.
She still lay there."

"There was no danger in her eyes.
She didn't respond, and I could not feel
the heat of her heart. I gave her a shake and her head went wob-
bling.

"I stopped that, as I saw that it
wouldn't do to shake her. She was too
weak to do so when she was too

"Then I beat her feet with her slippers
which I took off her feet. But I
couldn't get her awake. I was still
scared, though. Then I got Dr. Price,
a surgeon, to see her. He came and
I carried her to him. Dr. Price
then sent for Dr. McMichael. When Dr. Price got up to town, my
wife was dead."

"One prior occasion I had found
her in a similar condition, but had
been unable to wake her up. This was
years ago. Once I took off her un-
consciousness, the kitchen sink with a
cup around her. I was more nervous then.
She was never in the habit
of taking drugs, nor do I know of three
occasions when she took them."

"I imagine I hit her neck when
I shook her to revive her," admitted
the man who is accused. "I shook her to
relieve her of her neck when
the man who is accused further ad-
mitted. "That day we had had a
little trouble, and they switched the
conversation on an explanation about a
contested will."

Dr. Howard denied ever having had
any quarrel with his wife. "We
were close friends; this man is
my wife," he said, despite the damning
testimony of those who had observed
carefully for five years and
would have killed her for a million
dollars."

"Does she now go on running for old
for a wife who is almost dead and
to move a refrigerator back from the
door across the hall?" asked The
Times representative.

Dr. Price, who had come to see
when called by Dr. Howard, said
that when he came up to the apart-
ments he found the Howard refrigera-
tor in the place had always oc-
cupied, and that it had either been
moved back from the door by Dr.
Howard after he had climbed over the
transom, or had never been moved at
all."

"We never had a quarrel in our life
together," reiterated Dr. Howard. "Our
relations were more than friendly. She
was my greatest help. I never laid a
finger on the woman in my life."

"If I get out, I believe I will be
hanged," said the upbraided physi-
cian, looking through his bushy eyebrows
and seeing the cell as an animal
pen.

Dr. Howard, after admitting that he
never had a quarrel in his life,

he told the reporter:

Dr. Howard hollered "no good" now
and words, looked malignantly at the
reporter, nodded his head in his hands,
a minute, and then answered, "I
didn't think there was no bad on."

I moved the refrigerator back, and
threw an egg or two onto a stool can
never had a quarrel with her in
my life," he persisted.

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as was her wont. She went to her apartments on the third floor of the Bank of Marlinton building and a few minutes later her husband entered the building.

Mrs. Howard was not seen alive again. Witnesses say she came home about 6:30 o'clock, and her husband is said to have arrived about twenty minutes later.

Within ten or fifteen minutes he ran down the steps of the building calling for another doctor. He asserted his wife was unconscious from some drug and asked for a strichnine injection to revive her.

When Dr. J. W. Price arrived on the scene Mrs. Howard was dead. She lay on an unmade bed in a spare room, with her clothing disarranged and her slippers beside her. Her face carried an expression of fear, there were marks on the left side of her neck and her nose appeared bruised.

Her husband asserted he had found her locked in the spare room, lying on the bed, and that he believed she had been violently nauseated. He declared he slapped her face in an effort to revive her, and when this failed ran for another physician.

After Mrs. Howard's funeral, a committee of doctors questioned the undertaker, Z. E. Smith. He was asked if he had "seen anything strange about the body."

"Yes, the head seems to be loose," said the undertaker. The physicians' committee decided to have an autopsy before the body was shipped to Fincastle, where it was to be interred.

On examination it was found that there were no marks of a hypodermic on the body, and, in the words of Dr. J. W. Colter it was "clean as a whistle" of all such marks. It was argued that there had not been time for a narcotic to take effect from the time Mrs. Howard entered her home until she was found dead.

Came to Her Death From Violence, Was Verdict.

The verdict of the coroner's jury was that Mrs. Howard had come to her death "from violence, to wit, a dislocation of the neck," and that "with the evidence produced before us there is probable cause to believe that the said act of violence was committed at the hands of Oliver A. Howard."

The report of the jury was signed by W. L. Dearine, C. M. Kinkaid, M. P. Burr, F. D. MacComb, and L. S. Shoemaker.

Marlinton physicians regard as remarkable the method by which the marks were discovered on Mrs. Howard's throat. Instead of using an x-ray, the skin on the neck was drawn back, the adipose tissue distended and electric light reflected upon it. In this way the print of the thumb and three fingers appeared on the neck as clearly as a picture on a screen.

Dr. J. W. Colter, a physician of the Marlinton Hospital, and formerly an assistant superintendent of the Baltimore

proposition the morning of his wife's death, refused to utter a word further on the subject. His eyes glinted dangerously every time the reporter mentioned votes for women, but the vice-like grip of his jaws did not relax for a single word.

The State authorities assert that Dr. Howard's defense is shattered by every fact that has been discovered.

1. The liquid found on his wife's dress and face by chemical analysis was proved to be nothing but water.

2. No mark of insertion of a hypodermic needle was found on her body.

3. Her vitals examined, showed no trace of narcotic or poison of any kind. Method Known Only to Medical Man.

4. The manner in which her spine was dislocated is known to a physician alone.

5. Dr. Howard's account of moving the refrigerator is considered weak and lame.

6. Why were her slippers found on the bed beside her? Dr. Howard claims that he took off her shoes to beat her soles and thus bring her back to consciousness. "Why?" the State asks, "did he take off both shoes, and why did he say at first that he found her shoes at the foot of the bed on the floor beside her? Why the discrepancy?"

7. In the fifteen minutes between 6:30

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